

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ERDA-05 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-10

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OES-03 FEAE-00 XMB-02 PA-01 PRS-01

USIA-06 /058 W

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R 041011Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1267

INFO USDOC WASHDC

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 3607

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: IAEA, TECH, ERNG, TH

SUBJ: POSTPONEMENT OF ISSUING TENDERS FOR EGAT'S
NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT

REF BANGKOK 16593, OCTOBER 17, 1974

HONGKONG FOR EXIM-RAND; TOKYO FOR ERDA REP

1. SUMMARY. REFTEL REPORTED ANNOUNCEMENT BY EGAT OF POSTPONEMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSTRUCTION NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, WITH COMPLETION THEN PLANNED FOR ABOUT 1983. AT THAT TIME EGAT EXPECTED THAT TENDERS COULD BE ISSUED IN SPRING 1975, AND STATED THAT PLANS WERE UNCHANGED FOR USE OF USAEC'S URANIUM ENRICHMENT SERVICES. EGAT HAS NOW POSTPONED SCHEDULE FOR ISSUANCE OF TENDERS AND HAS REQUESTED AMENDMENT OF URANIUM ENRICHMENT CONTRACT TO PERMIT DELAY IN DELIVERIES OF ENRICHMENT SERVICES. END SUMMARY.

2. AT MARCH 3 LUNCHEON MEETING HOSTED BY VISITING GENERAL ELECTRIC EXECUTIVE, EGAT SENIOR MANAGER KASEM CHATIKANAWIT SPOKE OF NECESSITY TO DELAY CONSTRUCTION UNTIL "ABOUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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1983 OR 84". ASKED HOW THIS WOULD AFFECT PLANS TO ISSUE

TENDERS, HE SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH TENDER DOCUMENTS WERE NOW COMPLETE, THEY WOULD NOT BE ISSUED UNTIL "ABOUT 1976 OR 77". HE ATTRIBUTED NECESSITY FOR POSTPONEMENT PRIMARILY TO DECREASED PROJECTIONS OF ENERGY DEMAND, BUT ALSO MENTIONED PUBLIC CONCERN ABOUT SAFETY FACTORS, RESULTING FROM ADVERS PUBLICITY IN LOCAL PRESS ABOUT LEAKAGE IN U.S. NUCLEAR PLANTS.

3. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED SEPARATELY COPY OF MR. KASEM'S FEBRUARY 24 LETTER TO U.S. ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (ERDA), REFERRING TO NEED TO POSTPONE FOR TWO YEARS IMPLEMENTATION OF NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM AND REQUESTING AMENDMENT OF USAEC CONTRACT TO PERMIT DELAY IN DELIVERIES OF ENRICHMENT SERVICES TO A LATER DATE. KASEM NOTED THAT EGAT'S ATOMIC POWER DIVISION CHIEF, MR. PREECHA CHUNGWATANA, WOULD BE IN WASHINGTON APRIL 28 TO MAY 16 ON OTHER BUSINESS, AND PROPOSED MEETING WITH HIM DURING WEEKS BEGINNING APRIL 21 OR MAY 19 TO DISCUSS EGAT SITUATION.

4. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION, PREECHA INFORMED EMBASSY OFFICER THAT IT WAS STILL HOPED THAT PLANT COMPLETION COULD BE SCHEDULED FOR 1983, AND THAT TENDERS COULD BE ISSUED DURING 1976. HE NOTED THAT SEVENTEEN PERCENT ENERGY GROWTH RATE PROJECTED LAST YEAR FOR 1975 (REFTEL) IS NOW ESTIMATED AT ONLY ABOUT EIGHT OR NINE PERCENT. HE ALSO NOTED THAT EGAT WOULD PREFER LEARNING OF OPINIONS OF NEW GOVERNMENT BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH NUCLEAR PLANS.

5. PREECHA MENTIONED THAT EA/TB HAD BEEN VERY HELPFUL IN BRIEFING HIM WHEN HE WAS IN WASHINGTON LAST YEAR. EMBASSY OFFICER ASSURED HIM THAT HE COULD FEEL FREE TO CALL ON BUREAU FOR ASSISTANCE DURING HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT.

KINTNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CONSTRUCTION, NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS, CONTRACTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO03607
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750075-0576
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750386/aaaaczms.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BANGKOK 16593, 75 OCTOBER 17, 75 1974
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 MAR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 MAR 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <02 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSTPONEMENT OF ISSUING TENDERS FOR EGAT'S NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT
TAGS: TECH, ENRG, TH, IAEA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006